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convalescent homes and thus will be a positive and permeating influence.

That is what we are trying to do in Toronto. We have many discouragements but we are not easily cast down. There is a big job ahead of us in trying to get suitable literature to the convalescent soldier in hospital, rest homes and club. This will be difficult as we have found already, for government officials often "fancy themselves" and their choice of books is too often without intelligence. I am sure from your experience you can picture the official who says that anybody can run a library and choose books. He is sure he can and does not see the obvious moral the librarian draws.

In this connection let me urge that you keep your work organized for the years after the war and you may be able to help very definitely the soldier in his efforts to re-educate himself. The theory that the unambitious man can be made ambitious by education or that the war can bring out ambition and talents in a man who had them not is a fallacy that needs to be dealt with at once. We are suffering from some of that kind of false educational doctrine in our efforts towards re-education.

We are on the threshold of a vast educational undertaking too vast and far reaching for most of our educators, just as the conduct of the war itself has been too vast for those trained under former

conditions. Let us throw aside that faith in experience which hampered the early conduct of the war and which will likely hamper us in dealing with that most conservative social force, education. Let us acknowledge that experience is not the great thing needful, but youth with its imagination, hope and energy, and we in Canada, who were forced to remain at home and deal with the prosaic are trying to place the institution with which we are identified as prominently on the map of political and social intelligence, as our representatives in Europe have placed our country on the map of the world nations.

We are a nation of less than eight millions of people in a vast country which is bounded by three oceans and a friendly neighbor. We have equipped and sent to the great war 500,000 men; we have manufactured fifty millions of shells, forty-five millions of cartridge cases and sent millions of bushels of wheat to needy France and starving Belgium.

And in every good word and work in which we had a chance to help—or could make the chance—the institution which I have the honor to represent, the library, has been "on the job" and when possible has led the way. We expect to be even more necessary and more useful in the reconstruction days to come and are trusting your efficient organization to be of great service to us.

THE A. L. A. FOLLOWS THE FLAG OVERSEAS

By M. LLEWELLYN RANEY, *Librarian of The Johns Hopkins University (Director of Overseas Service for the A. L. A.)*

The road turned sharply to the west. Standing at the turn, if one dared, and stretching out his arms along the highway, he would grasp, in each hand, as it were, a village three-quarters of a mile off—a French village ruined and deserted. The one to the right was the first behind our trenches; that to the left the last in the line of communication. The bend half-

way was, therefore, an important link in the chain, and the enemy hammered away consistently in the hope of breaking it. An attractive target was it, not only because a direct hit on the roadbed would impede the movement of supply trains, but couched in the lee were hidden officers and material, while on the convex side sat tangent and camouflaged an American battery, so

that a shot long or short might be equally effective. The ground in the triangle bore mute evidence of the intensity of the endeavor, for it was filled with shell holes. They called it "Hell's Half Acre," and the turn of the road "Dead Man's Curve."

We left our machine in the nearer village, behind the shield of a fragmentary wall, and followed the custom in reaching the farther village on foot, along the hypotenuse, across fields and through wire entanglements. So enticing, however, was the scene, that I was back again part way that night, and on the following day we swung at top speed around the horseshoe itself and down the full length of our line—an adventure which the Army authorities have since found it necessary to forbid, except under cover of darkness.

My first visit was made in the shank of a beautiful day. Our guns had already started the argument of the night. Slipping down the incline on the other side of the road, we found ourselves at the dugout doorway of two young officers. It seems that a gas shell had fallen in that vicinity the night before and taken toll of their comrades. Their minds went back to that event, and, in the case of one of them, back further to a wife and four little ones in the west. Went back with that quiet, determined smile, which, please God, the Hun shall rue the day he ever awakened by his ruthless barbarism!

And what were these our defenders doing, as we chanced upon them in the gathering shadows? On the little table lighted by a single candle were spread out for the one a *National Geographic Magazine* of a bygone day, and for the other a *Literary Digest* recently issued. Such was my first glimpse of the American zone of advance. Our promise of an adequate library service from home was received with hearty appreciation, and the promise has been kept. If those young lieutenants be still there alive, they can find, ten minutes' walk away, a good stock of A. L. A. books and magazines. But before our first shipment could reach and leave Paris, a special messenger was sent

to us all the way from the front, begging immediate dispatch of our wares, since for them had grown a clamorous demand.

Into the farther village we tramped, entering through the little gardens and orchards of once happy homes, now the resting place of our first fallen, with the grass green above them and at their feet flowers, planted by the hands of unforgetting comrades. A place of utter desolation—only one roof remaining and not one inhabitant, nor even a dog or cat left within its shattered walls. But in subterranean retreats lay our Crusaders from over the Atlantic and after the rest of the day, were crowding about the counter of civilization's only vestige—the Y. M. C. A. canteen—installed under that sole remaining roof.

The next village found the busy hour of barter passing. Trench time was just ahead. Down in the Y's "cave voutée" the men were standing about in the gloom pierced by a lone candle—full-panoplied and with masks alert. It was a quiet, subdued, knowing crowd—not a word of profanity or one smutty remark. Someone turned to the phonograph and put on "Mandalay." A whistle started up from the corner and soon all inside and out had joined in, but joined so softly that, despite a fiber needle, the instrument was allowed to carry over them all. Then a negro piece, and they laughed quietly at the crude but cleanly jokes, so quietly that not a word was lost. Outside, in the glory of a declining sun, they were lolling under the remnant walls which shielded them from the enemy's eye and his sniping—reading, nearly all, or turning lazily through the illustrations or the columns of humor. The devoted secretary told me that if his scanty store of books and periodicals were multiplied manyfold, he would not have enough to satisfy these hungry souls. Thus they were spending the only normal hour, which, in twenty-four, was vouchsafed them in such advanced post. A little later they were off down the concealed roadway, and dropping beneath the hedge into communicating trenches, had

passed into the night to have it out with death.

Since then our supply has come, and you will not exaggerate the rejoicing consequent.

Such are the doughboys in action, but at any given time a much greater number of them are detailed to other necessary work and have a different schedule. And if we add the supply trains, headquarters police, veterinarians, etc., as well as the upwards of twelve hundred officers, we shall not have accounted for two-thirds of the 27,000 men that go to make up a combat division. Thus there are about 4,500 artillerymen, 2,500 machine gunners, 1,500 engineers, 1,500 engaged in medical and sanitary work and 500 belonging to the signal corps—groups having each a life peculiar to itself, and calling to us in its own tongue. For example, strong representations are made in behalf of the gun crews, because they are not only men of technical training, and, therefore, accustomed to richer mental pabulum, but they are confined to a square which cannot be left by them or entered by another; and yet, though on duty for twenty-four hours a day and perhaps for days in succession, they may have waited in vain to hear the telephonic command to fire. So time hangs heavily. Special means must be devised to reach them. We hope we have found them through the chaplain, in his usual function of regimental postmaster, since reading matter can be sent with the mail on munition trains moving at night to the outlying gun positions. As for detached units, the military have agreed to forward our parcels directly for us.

Back of the fighting zone lie the so-called divisional areas, where the final training takes place and where after action they go for repose. Here the troops are billeted in strings of French villages set along the great arteries of travel and their principal feeders. Perhaps nowhere do most men miss the comforts of home—the customary diversions of civil life, more than among these kindly neighbors of a

foreign tongue with their mocking reminders of native land and loved surroundings. Here, whether in anticipation of the trial by fire, or relaxation from it, they miss keenly the presence of women and children. It is a good lesson to learn and should deepen the wells of domestic affection when they return. Meanwhile one cannot but be touched by their brave improvisations, their good-hearted endeavors to bridge the chasm. Like rain to parched ground is a cheering entertainer to them, and how ravenously they read. Eagerly they are hunting substitutes and escapes. The great thing about a noble book is that therein they are apt to find better than they sought or had known.

One evening I came unannounced upon a crowd packing a hut to the doors in anticipation of a performance put on by their own talent. They had their own volunteer band and there were to be lots of stunts. Just as the instruments were tuning up, it reached the ears of the officer in charge that a library man from America was in the building. So I was ushered to the platform and the story of our proposed service became the first number on the program. The idea was vigorously applauded. In fact, before I could settle down to the evening's schedule, I had to go out and reassure an eager group of distant listeners that they had heard correctly and the news was reliable.

In this great finishing region is the center of army schools for the training of staff officers, as well as the corps schools where line officers are bred. Thus at the former there are no less than eighteen sections, such as for example, anti-aircraft, camouflage, carrier-pigeons, dentistry, engineering (with several subdivisions, like mines, flash and sound, bridge-building, and construction), gas, infantry specialties (e.g. bayonet, machine gun, marksmanship, sniping, etc.), signal corps, tanks, trench mortars, and so on, together with a general staff college, at which a former secretary of war was a pupil when the present secretary made his visit.

Textbooks the Government provides. The

matter may be so new as to be issued in mimeographed form alone. But we can be very useful in our supply of collateral technical reading. Thus the cablegram calling for five hundred copies of "Jeanne d'Arc," demands thirty of "Metal workers' pattern book." We have already made such contributions as we had on hand, and the staffs of instruction have promised to suggest bibliographies supplementary. They, of course, get their share of recreational reading also.

In this zone of advance, the unit of library service must be the division, even though it may extend through forty villages. It arrives suddenly, stays an indefinite but relatively short period, passes up to the front for the fire-test, comes back after a few weeks to a divisional area, but likely enough not to the same one, for refitting, thence to the front again. Thus a certain division occupied in the course of six months four different and widely separated positions. Before you could make a library survey by villages and get them supplied fittingly, the area might be emptied, and then either remain so or be refilled by another with quite dissimilar distribution of personnel. An organization like the Y. M. C. A., Knights of Columbus or Salvation Army, that aims to get a hut in all of the chief villages, is severely taxed to keep abreast. It seems best for us to compose a proper divisional equipment, send it to a center for fitting distribution, and then when the division moves out, restore our collections to the central warehouse of our host organization, unless there be reason to suppose that the area is being abandoned. A fresh layout is then to be sent along for the division's use, in its new position. Wastage, of course, there must be, but the loss is not absolute, as long as a worthy volume remains in somebody's possession.

We cross the line now into the intermediate area, where the divisions, except replacement, are in disintegration. The exception feeds the front and is fed from the coast—a pool of men in the midst of a steady stream. Here are the camps of

casuals—unfortunates from both directions meeting. They have gotten separated from their units, perhaps missed the paymaster, and await reassignment. Coming the other direction are fellows incapacitated for one reason or another. The place is a mixture of barracks and hospitals. The fellows are apt to be low in spirit and pocket. Here we had no difficulty in getting our doctrine of free service accepted, for the Y. M. C. A. did not have the heart to exact its usual deposit.

Here too are great training camps, especially for artillery and aviation. For example, out in the fields, miles away from the nearest village, an American city with a population of 10,000 has been laid out. It has its own macadamized roads, electric lighting plant, water works, sewage disposal and railroad—a city of huts, offices, warehouses, sheds—an aviation center. When you reflect that we have in Europe scores of such camps, with three dozen to ten thousand in each, and that there are 150 mechanics to every eighteen fliers, and that the pilots also have their term of ground training, you can appreciate the importance of the service, when we meet the urgent demand of the officers to supply books on aeronautics for the men in the shops.

Here are the great midway depots and plants. For example, one of these depots is an ice factory and the third largest producer in the world, furnishing daily ice for the cold storage of eleven million pounds of meat. It is six and a half miles long and at parts two miles broad.

Salvage plants and bakeries, camouflage factories and ammunition caches all find place here. This brings concentrations of specialists in training centers, labor and technical troops, ordnance and warehouse men, forestry and engineering or construction troops, guards and headquarters contingents—units living largely in barracks and making a very definite demand on us which we are steadily advancing to meet.

Finally there's Aix-les-Bains — that unique experiment of our army, upon which the eyes of our military and the

Allies are earnestly fixed. Will it take? Will the fellows call it vacation if their leave be spent under the eyes of officers, no matter how crowded the pleasures? If it succeeds, such places will be multiplied. All the hotels in this popular bathing place have been taken over by the army and rooms are drawn by lot. The magnificent suites of wealth and nobility are now occupied by our doughboys from the trenches. There are excursions, boating, bathing and other sports; Europe's band and a theater, and in the Y's casino at least we shall have a fine show of books, with a trained librarian in charge.

In this region, and the third to which we now turn, the base areas surrounding the ports—for all Gaul is divided into three parts, each of which the Americans inhabit—the engineer comes into his own, though his work runs from water's edge to No Man's Land. They are the sapper, searchlight and sound-ranging troops; theirs are the gas and flame, the electrical and mechanical regiments; they build the bridges and railroads and operate them as well; they put in the docks, warehouses, barracks and hospitals; they operate the cranes, autos, trucks and depots. A year ago at a certain French port there were a few small wharfs, approachable by light draft vessels, which were emptied and loaded by hand labor. To-day we have driven 30,000 piles with machinery and constructed four great docks capable of accommodating sixteen heavy cargo vessels at the same time and deepened the channel for their entry. American railways have been laid, cranes installed and 150 warehouses are in various stages of construction, and here they put together American locomotives and not far away the cars.

At another port you can now walk along three miles of landing stages and see 375,000 square feet of wharf space, where last October there was a swamp. Nearby is a remarkable system of warehouses which will cover nearly 2,000 acres; not to mention a mighty railway system. A hospital of 25,000 beds, the largest in the world, is

here being built, while in this area is accommodation for 25 per cent of the command. This means a concentration of 12,000 laborers in this region. Then there are the naval stations and rest camps for troops arriving. But time does not suffice to enumerate all the types of concentrations in these base areas, or the kinds of library service patently appropriate. Suffice it to say that it was in these areas that we felt it necessary to place our first consignments. One case only I must specify, and that because it might generally be overlooked. I wish there were space to print in full a stirring appeal sent us for books by a commander of stevedores in one of these port cities. He wanted recreation books to combat the social evil. Two months of very careful study had convinced him that they were the best antidote. "A man who can get hold of a book," he writes, "stays at home and reads it, soon improves in the matters of dress and military conduct and shows improvement in morals and self-respect." And the illiterate hear and learn from them.

Now that, backing from the front, we have reached the water, I am reminded that it was due to the Navy that I landed at all and the commander of the United States naval forces operating in European waters was the first consulted. I might, therefore, with propriety obey chronology.

Well, the admiral had had an experience and so was shy of welfare organizations. Besides, the larger ships possessed libraries and a fund from which to replenish them. And then at our chief naval base friends had erected and presented to the navy a fine clubhouse, with books abundant as part of its equipment. Perhaps a little patience would bring a similar boon to the other bases. Still the reception was cordial and he matched the Secretary's letter with a pass to all naval stations under his command and an instruction to his officers that they extend every facility for carrying out this work.

If fortune began thus faintly to smile, she beamed upon us in France, for, repair-

ing thither without disturbing the balance in Ireland, I stumbled at naval headquarters in Paris upon a group of officers who at once set up a vigorous plea in behalf of the aviation stations. These boys, with a good percentage of college graduates among them, were choice fellows, and yet set usually in out-of-the-way places, with recreational provision scanty or none. Their admiral out at the coast endorsed what they had to say, but wanted it distinctly understood that his boys on the boats were just as deserving of our remembrance. Of this he was good enough to give me a demonstration at first hand, for out to sea I went for two days and nights in the flagship of a convoying fleet in its work down the French coast. Those full hours we must not now peer into. Suffice it to say that I was given the freedom of the vessel, running from bridge to boiler-room, bunking with the surgeon, dining with the officers, chatting with the crew, sighting the guns—filled with the lore of those wonderful months. Hundreds of impressions have since been recorded on the privileged plate of my mind, but that first one cannot be effaced. These heroes of the sea, their every hour uncertain, whether tracking the serpent beneath the waves, or scouring for his horned eggs, have won my heart for aye and shall have the A. L. A.'s warmest hand.

Did they have time or inclination for books, as some had denied? I spent an evening with them in the crowded quarters under deck and there I saw a dozen of them lying in their bunks reading. Many of them had fastened soap boxes on the side of the hull opposite their narrow beds, and these were the little libraries of their very own! It seems that they used to make a continuous run of it, but the losses at night were so considerable that our naval authorities had finally prevailed on the British and French to run their merchant vessels down the coast only in daylight. So the fellows had their evenings to themselves. The opportunity was there and the desire was not lacking. The body was constrained, but the mind was

eager to wander. Travel they wanted, adventures of the sea, stirring Western fiction from home, and good tales of the war. Empey they instanced, and called for Jack London, Zane Grey, Ralph Connor, Stanley Weyman, Joseph Conrad, Kipling, Stevenson, and someone mentioned French textbooks. Oh, yes, they knew what they wanted, and what they did not too; for example, religious books, though they confessed there was one fellow who did a lot of such reading and had also distinguished himself by keeping clear of their pet vices. After all, their minds went back to him, I noticed, and I believe they would not like it if our selection had nothing to please this peculiar comrade.

The water trip past, I went by land on to the U. S. naval aviation headquarters in France. There the same cordial greeting was given and the commander was so interested that he said he would, if necessary, appoint a special officer whose sole duty would be the management of the collections sent his stations. Distribution by a naval vessel was arranged. We could be assured, he said, that not only would this material not be abused, but it would be husbanded by appreciative fellows as a treasure. We hope, indeed, there is soon to be a Y. M. C. A. hut at all stations, so as to afford adequate shelter and attention to our collections.

The service began on the spot, as a matter of fact. Men in some of the stations were to take Annapolis examinations the next month. They did not have the necessary textbooks and a preliminary test showed they were sure to fail without them. Could we help? We could and did. A cablegram was sent at once to London. The books came promptly and were immediately distributed to the candidates, "each one of whom" so the officer writes, "expressed sincere thanks." And he added: "No doubt this is the beginning of a very useful mission which you ought to perform with our men in Europe."

A cablegram was then sent to Washington, calling for shipment of 8,000 volumes,

equally divided between the vessels and hydroplane stations in France, addressed to our commanding officers at two French ports, and brought over in naval supply vessels. This has been supplemented by other consignments, including a hundred different periodicals by subscription.

Well, I saw Admiral Sims again, and then it was a different story. If fortune had first smiled and then beamed, she now laughed outright. He had heard from France, and as a result he wanted books sent to every arm of his service, naval bases, aviation stations, mine-sweeping bases, and even his pet battleships that in February would never, never need us, he asks us in May surely not to forget. And for good fellowship they want to exchange books with the British fleet.

I could go back home on a transport if I wished and was given a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, in which he says: "We recognize, of course, the great value of Mr. Raney's services and those of his Association in increasing the contentment of our forces, and he may be entirely sure that his efforts in this respect will be appreciated by many thousands of men over here."

At his request routes have now been mapped out with the Navy Department for supplying books to our far-flung line in Europe. Whether hovering about the British Isles, slipping through the Bay of Biscay, keeping guard at Gibraltar, or stopping the rat holes in nameless islands, we shall follow them in their devoted task and at the odd hour of rest hope to give them cheer from home.

If the navy situation had been delicate, it was child's play compared with the difficulties faced when we turned to the army, whether in England or France. There stood a decree fixed in general orders, which seemed to allocate the field of civilian activity to the Red Cross and Y. M. C. A.—the one to handle the ill, the other the well. Accordingly both had been militarized; the one holding the hospitals, the other operating the canteen. They rode

about in army machines, drew upon the commissary for supplies shipped in Government bottoms, and travelled at military rates. The arrangement was logical, there was no use in denying it. If you were a military commander, you would demand the same simplification, and, moreover, it was due the American people, who have to meet the cost. You could accordingly feel in the atmosphere a working agreement to kill off newcomers, and the backyards of all three parties were white with the bleaching bones of would-be associates.

If thus they had the support of law, they had added the effectiveness of possession—proverbially the more important—holding, that is, both credentials and chronology. They had been in the field for months and were amazing Europe by the magnitude and uniqueness of their programs. Both had taken the world for their province, and the press was full of their doings. While the army was necessarily struggling to reach its feet, here were two magnificent American organizations which were winning us plaudits for daring performances on a big scale.

And they had preëmption not merely in general, but in particular had been at library service since the summer of 1917. On each side of the channel, they both had library departments, with staffs of size and budgets boundless. Active buyers sat in the London market, sending books and periodicals across and afield.

Finally in hut and hospital they had ready to hand the only establishments which were strategically in position for rendering the service.

There was nothing theoretical about this, you will agree. My instructions did not cover the case, though the diplomatic character of the mission was underscored. So, taking stock of our resources, which included (1) a letter of introduction and authorization from the Secretary of War to General Pershing, (2) command of American book resources, and (3) trained personnel, I determined to stake our future overseas on a single throw, and that was

the following communication presented in person at general headquarters:

February 20, 1918,
c/o American Embassy,
Paris.

General John J. Pershing, Commander-in-Chief, American Expeditionary Force, France.

Sir:—As seen from the letters of Secretaries Baker and Daniels, the American Library Association has been engaged by the War and Navy Departments as the agency to supply our forces at home and overseas with reading material during the war.

For this purpose a fund has been raised by popular subscription, while books and magazines are being systematically solicited in the United States.

The headquarters of this service are at the Library of Congress, and Dr. Herbert Putnam is general director.

First attention was given to the training centers in America. Through a generous gift of the Carnegie Corporation, it became possible to erect and furnish in each of thirty-five camps and cantonments a central building with ample accommodations for books, readers and attendants. A month ago 500,000 volumes had been installed, one-fifth purchased, the rest given.

I am now sent to Europe to map out a line of action appropriate for the Association. After study of British methods which, under the aegis of the Government, are carried out on a huge scale, and after a rapid survey of the local situation, the rough outline of our obligation can be discerned. Let me briefly sketch it.

Our Association has but one concern and that is to reach the man with the book that's needed. Whatever procedure will accomplish that shall be adopted, no matter whether an old one or a new one. You welcome us; we shall not abuse the confidence. Our business here is to win the war and every proposal is to stand or fall according as it helps or hinders this business. We do not offer to add a fifth wheel from vanity or upset the carriage to get credit for fixing it. But we do want to meet our obligation to the American people who give the money and material, to the Government that appoints us, and especially to the boys, who have the right to command us. If library service fails, our Association will reap the dishonor. We must, therefore, under your sanction, proceed with care, though in a spirit of utter unselfishness.

Now the man, well or ill, needs to be reached. There are found already at hand

two great trusted organizations which have established that contact—the American Red Cross and the American Y. M. C. A. If these (and in less degree) other agencies can receive, deliver and administer effectively our wares, it is the part of wisdom and should be of pleasure for us so to consign those wares. That is what under conditions we propose to do.

To receive such material they are patently able. Their ability to convey it efficiently has yet to be demonstrated, and to dispense it wisely requires the finest thought that our combined heads and hearts can from day to day conceive.

No new name needs therefore to be added to the receiving agencies, no warehouses by us engaged. What we require here, so far as France is concerned, is a trained man of high executive and interpretative ability, who shall serve three ends: (1) Be a balance wheel between the Red Cross and Y. M. C. A., passing upon their claims for percentage of shipment; (2) key up the executive centers and field services, as of authority, to effective performance, by freely examining and freely prescribing; (3) interpret systematically to us in America the situation as it develops, so that we in turn may on the other side meet our obligation.

And what is that obligation?

To be the reservoir, and the only one, under Governmental decree, from which to draw supplies of this sort.

And why one only?

To prevent duplication of effort and shipment of useless material; therefore, to save tonnage, which is precious.

Why the American Library Association, rather than another organization, entirely aside from the Governmental status?

Because in the finely and widely ramified public library system in the United States we have at hand without cost an agency for collecting and sorting material, and in purchases we have been granted unparalleled discounts by publishers and cession of royalties by authors. In our various depots and especially the two terminal ones at Hoboken and Newport News, we can separate the fit from the unfit and dispatch material in classified form and economic volume ready for immediate consumption on arrival overseas. We become, therefore, the neck of the American bottle.

In this rough sketch of our proposed European work on both sides of the Atlantic, some qualification is now seen necessary and more may appear hereafter.

As here defined, our representative in Paris (or London) has mainly an advi-

sory and ambassadorial function, though since our material is in question it might be expected that his advice would get adoption. It may become quickly necessary, in order that we should meet our contract with the Government, that our Association should become the apex of an executive pyramid with the two associative organizations the base, establishing policy and exercising authority.

On the other hand, the American Library Association does not touch what may be termed the technical library work of either associate, though its advice where requested must be freely given. I refer, on the one hand for example, to the Central Medical Library being established in Paris by the American Red Cross for American doctors in military service, though it happens that we were in position to render here a marked service; and on the other hand, reference is here made to the religious, educational, and other stock which the Y. M. C. A. assembles as apparatus for its special courses and work.

If the American Library Association, in your judgment, is thus meeting its obligation in the right spirit, and if the scheme seems commendable and the service welcome, I might respectfully hope to receive from you, (1) a statement to such effect; (2) a status, which under continuous control might enable me (and anyone who might succeed me) to make the necessary inspection of possible book centers, as Admiral Sims has accorded, at military rates of travel; (3) a request of Washington that we be secured the American shipping monopoly above suggested; (4) a small concession of tonnage to us (say 50 tons a month), which may in fact be no greater than at present consumed in purposeless but inadequate shipments; (5) communication from time to time of sufficient information to make our organization responsive to your growing and changing need.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

(Signed) M. LLEWELLYN RANEY,
Director of Overseas War Service,
American Library Association.

To this was appended the following endorsements:

If the general plan of the above meets with the approval of the Commander-in-Chief, the A. E. F. Y. M. C. A. will be glad to cooperate along such lines as the Commander-in-Chief may designate.

(Signed) E. C. CARTER,
Chief, A. E. F. Y. M. C. A.

The American Red Cross will be glad to

coöperate along the same lines as the coöperation given by the Y. M. C. A.

(Signed) J. H. PERKINS,
Major O. R. C., U. S. A.,
Commissioner for Europe,
American Red Cross.

The official reply follows:

February 22, 1918.

From: C. in C.

To: Director of Overseas War Service,
American Library Association. Subject:
Supply of Library Material to A. E. F.

1. In answer to your letter of February 20, which has been received and considered with great interest, the following conclusions have been arrived at.

2. The scheme which is proposed is commendable and the service is welcome. The details of distribution, due to the present tonnage conditions, make it desirable that the plan of working out the scheme for the distribution of proper reading matter to the A. E. F. be handled in connection with the existing agencies now working for their well-being, that is, the Y. M. C. A. and the Red Cross.

As indicated in your letter, both of these organizations have expressed their willingness and desire to coöperate and it is believed that a mutual exchange of information and facilities will enable your scheme to be carried out to the great advantage of all concerned.

3. For the present, a tonnage of not to exceed 50 ship tons per month has been requested from Washington for this purpose, and it is believed that this should be sufficient, and that no allotment of tonnage for a similar purpose should be made.

4. The intent of the above recommendation is that there should not be any competition in supplying this matter to the troops, but that the work should be centralized in the American Library Association.

By order of the C. in C.

JAMES A. LOGAN, JR.,
Lt. Col. G. S., A. C. of S., G-I.

This was backed up by a cablegram from the Commander-in-Chief to the Chief of Staff in Washington, recommending the desired grant of tonnage to us, with the proviso that none be allotted to any other organization for similar purpose.

To this the Chief of Staff in time acceded, with in turn a proviso that such consignments be addressed to the "Chief Quartermaster A. E. F., France, for distribution."

That official countered with an offer to erect us without cost a warehouse at an important interior point, to which he would dispatch our shipments at Government expense. The offer was, of course, accepted; the warehouse is about completed, and books in quantity are en route thither.

Fifty tons, I explained, was a small amount, but it would suffice, provided, first, that we had the monopoly, because duplicate and unfitting material would thus be turned away from the ships; and provided, second, that we had military support in the conservation of what we did send. The latter came to be afforded in a peculiar and gratifying fashion. The General whose famous sayings "*Nous voici enfin, o Lafayette*" and "*Disposez de nous comme il vous plaira*," so stirred the heart of France, gave us also his signature to a sentiment, which, used in or with the books, records his moral alliance without invoking his official authority, which would have involved penalties and consequent alienation. So above our cases stands a placard which is headed:

WAR SERVICE LIBRARY

provided by the
People of the United States
through

THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

and, following then with an announcement of a service without any charge, and a few simple rules, concludes with this quotation:

These books come to us overseas from home. To read them is a privilege; to restore them promptly unabused, a duty.

(Signed) JOHN J. PERSHING.

Of course, before that first fruitful visit to general headquarters a deal of water had gone under the bridge, and after it a great deal more, before a final settlement was reached. Our overseas constitution, as we may call it, bore the written endorsement of the two great associated organizations. The negotiations which led up to this and tediously followed it need not here be recounted. Men of vision were at the head of each, and it was a pleasure

to deal with them. The Red Cross found us useful in strengthening its Medical Library established in Paris for American doctors in military service, since, by cabled exchanges with Washington, conferences with French officials, and a visit to Switzerland, we put them in the way of securing their much needed journals from enemy countries—found us so useful in fact, that they finally agreed to have us run this central library for them and have its fine suite of rooms in the Reinhart Galleries for our headquarters, if we liked.

As for the Y. M. C. A., its library department was suffering from growing pains. We were called in consultation and in the end our prescription was accepted. It is now pretty well settled that our European staff, headed by Mr. Burton E. Stevenson, will occupy a rented floor in the same mansion as the Y. M. C. A.'s educational and allied departments are about to enter. We shall in any case maintain at our headquarters a reference library and take over their reference work. Aside from their own religious and similar technical stock, it will be our books that go to the huts, and they will maintain an experienced business manager, who will see that requisitions are carried out, and a competent field secretary, who will greatly aid us in keeping abreast of conditions.

But more potent than either of these considerations was our promise of American books. The men did not like the English substitutes which the Y. M. C. A. had felt compelled to use. Besides, the London market was going dry and prices were advancing. Editions were not being reprinted, owing to shortness of paper and labor. Furthermore, the great British organizations, which were feeding the British armed forces on a huge scale, looked with anxiety on American competition, so that a moral issue was raised. The Red Cross was so desirous of escaping from this dilemma that it offered to share its present tonnage with us to bring over American reading material for our hospitals in Europe. Indeed, under this arrangement, we have made an initial shipment of 25,000

volumes to France, and instructions have been issued for similar dispatch of 5,000 volumes to England, with regular monthly service to follow in each case.

The Y. M. C. A. had no tonnage to spare, but it could help in another way. Men needed books *en voyage*. The military authorities consented to have us put boxes on transports for deck usage. The Y. M. C. A. secretaries and the chaplains agreed to look out for the books en route, to re-box and deliver them in port. Here, going into their warehouses, they would be subject to our further orders for distribution. While there has been an enormous amount of loss in this service, and we are consequently in negotiation with Washington for a change of method, it has been immensely popular, and thus far our chief source of supply overseas.

And here it is fitting to say that in the British Isles our interests are for the time to be looked after by Mr. G. H. Grubb, of G. P. Putnam's Sons in London, whom we succeeded in attaching to the Y. M. C. A. staff there. A little later, when the situation develops more, we shall doubtless find it expedient to send a special representative over.

I spoke above about keeping abreast of conditions. This reminds me of the fifth and last request set down at the end of our constitution—"communication from time to time of sufficient information to make our organization responsive to your growing and changing need." Headquarters' frank compliance with that petition constitutes my chief embarrassment in appearing here today and draws perforce a veil about the British Isles. So much the best remains untold. Never did our army more strikingly evince its essentially democratic character than when it suffered us to set up in the military zone a library service based on scientific surveys. We were not required to sit off in Paris and conduct correspondence. We could rather move freely among the men, make our own observations and apply our own conclusions. Nor were we censored. The result is going to be a unique record, and the be-

trayal of confidence would be unthinkable. We are of the brotherhood that means to bind the madmen of central Europe and it is ours to warm the hearts and clarify the vision of our comrades.

Survey? The word had not been uttered in Paris before we came. There were no field reports, no visitations. We began with a demonstration of the military map at General Headquarters. My time in France was spent in keying up Paris and plotting the field. Consequently when our material at length began to arrive it knew just where to go and it cannot come too fast to embarrass us; nor will the stevedore get a book on trench mortars, or anybody the cast-offs of the garret.

Again the constitution speaks about a pyramid. It is already in course of construction. We have persuaded our associates to enter a library council, of which our representative is chairman. The other recognized organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus and Salvation Army, will, of course, be accorded membership also. Overlapping of effort will thus be checked, systemization and improvement of practice secured.

And here let it be said once for all that if we seem to be stressing unduly the importance of our liaison with the two largest of our associates, we do not fail to value the opportunity offered through the smaller ones.

The Knights of Columbus promise an interesting opening a little later. When I left France they were deep in plans and busy with the cables.

Make no mistake about it, the service of the Salvation Army is keenly appreciated by the men. It is ably led, evinces good strategic sense, has mobility and displays its traditional sympathy for the sorely tried by planting its huts along the fringe of fire. The boys speak of simple affection shown them and I can well believe it, when I recall, as needs must, one shining face of which I caught a glimpse behind the counter as I peered into the doorway at twilight. It is with pleasure and assur-

ance that we have made all their huts an initial shipment.

And the Y. W. C. A. shall not be forgotten. How fine a conception to offer what the men so highly value—normal relations with normal women. It was in a hostess house that one of the prettiest services I heard of in my whole stay in Europe was being rendered. It is a classic of benevolence, literally too sacred for publication. Right cheerfully will our books be sent there.

Finally, through the coöperation of Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. we have been enabled to make arrangements in Switzerland for serving our prisoners of war in Germany and Austria. The Red Cross is to furnish foodstuffs, clothing and medicine, we are to provide books, and the Y. M. C. A. to make other recreational provisions, their proposed independent appeal for reading material being abandoned. I visited Berne and Geneva for this purpose and left behind an order for 6,000 volumes as an initial stock. Further appropriate shipments will be made from our stores in France, and we shall have the aid of the Y. M. C. A. in their distribution.

To meet all these demands, we have established six dispatch offices in America at points of embarkation. According to their reports, more than 400,000 volumes have been sent to the docks so far. Mr. Stevenson cables that up to June 12 203 points in France had been reached with first shipments.

The material goes in classified form in standard cases, holding about fifty or sixty volumes each. Strongly and neatly built, with screwed-on top and medial shelf, they have, when stacked, the value of a sectional bookcase. The inauguration of the service was announced originally in the Paris newspapers; then by a formal circular, mailed out to all custodians. Finally, each box contains a copy of the placard to surmount it, as already mentioned, and a set of instructions for the librarian in charge. The volumes are all labeled and pocketed ready for use.

The miscellaneous box, which naturally

predominates, is made up of three-fourths fiction and one-fourth other recreational material. About one book in ten in such cases we aim to take from purchased stock.

The reference and technical books are, of course, largely bought. They go in cargo for the most part, and their character is plainly stenciled on the lid, so that they may be appropriately assigned in the field without the necessity of breaking bulk.

As to magazines, we have proceeded with caution. Displacing, as we have so largely, the library work of our associates otherwise, we have hesitated to take over also the magazine service, which they are maintaining with regularity and at great expense. However, we have made a beginning by inducing a certain number of publishers to turn over unsold remainders to us, and if the Burleson sacks are to resume overseas dispatch and get effective use, we shall have to receive, sift and forward them. These magazines of ours are all for trench usage, non-returnable.

Thus the cycle is complete from training camps in the United States to troop trains (as we contemplate) and transports, from port to the front and back to rest station, hospital or captivity; with the naval units, whether ashore or at sea, from the British Isles to the Mediterranean, we follow the flag.

Complete, did I say? Not till the boys get home again. The war is going to end one of these days, but repatriation will take a year or two. To combat the perils of reaction and to prepare for civilian life, the army is to be put to school during that period. We have our eyes already on that wonderful opportunity.

And then, France, glorious France, blood-redeemed, has heard of the American public library, which, finding literal translation inadequate, it dignifies with the sobriquet, *Maison de Tous*, The People's House. A great organization headed by the President of the Republic, planning for the social reconstruction of France after the war, has decided to transplant this

unique institution and make it the center of the plan. Our aid is asked. Who can foresee the result?

The American Library Association was born a Crusader. It first saw the light at an international exposition. At the tender

age of one year, it was in England, a god-mother. Through the proceedings of forty years has run the red thread of service to democracy. It found no difficulty, therefore, in following the flag overseas. May the fairest page in its history be the one that is writ in blood.

THE COÖPERATION OF THE Y. M. C. A. AND THE A. L. A.

BY WILLIAM ORR, *Educational Director, National War Work Council, Y. M. C. A.*

A year ago it was my privilege, by the courtesy of your officers, to appear before you and to present the attitude of the Young Men's Christian Association with regard to any coöperation in this matter of the supply of library books. I think both parties in the case thought they were taking some chances. We very cleverly concealed any such misapprehensions, any such misgivings, and undertook to carry out in absolute good faith and sincerity what you have undertaken as a common enterprise, and now at the end of the year all those misgivings have disappeared. I would not say that we have attained to a state of absolute perfection; that would indicate that either one or both of the parties were not much concerned about the enterprise if there was absolute agreement. But as we move along steadily one issue after another has been settled and settled in a way not to serve the advantage of either organization in the long run but for the good of the common cause.

It is a remarkable demonstration, more significant than all the service rendered, of how with the right spirit in these organizations, somewhat diverse in their methods, each with its own professional pride, each with its own particular ideas, they work together and achieve large results. Again and again there have come to us from the field in this country testimonials on the part of our secretaries of their keen appreciation of the large service that has been rendered by your Association to them in supplying books and

reading matter of various kinds, and not only in supplying the material but in giving them expert service, advice and counsel, whereby that material has been made of large value to the soldiers.

I have not time to go into all the details of what has been done in this country. That has been read before you in papers in terms you comprehend to a better extent than I. I just want to give you some figures that came to us. They are fairly reliable, and that is a fearful thing to say about any statistics, especially those secured from war camps, but they have been checked up and the demonstration is rather significant. We collected for the first three months in the year, by a special survey from our camps in this country, figures in regard to the books, and it appeared from those figures that over a million and a quarter books were being circulated from the Y. M. C. A. buildings. Those books in almost all cases have come as contributions from the American Library Association. I want to tell you also that the Y. M. C. A. buildings have certain other forms of activities which we conduct within our own sphere, under our own jurisdiction, to which the library service is a most important adjunct. We have, for example, lectures. I do not recall the exact number of lectures, but they were on all kinds of subjects, upon the war and its causes, on natural history, literature, anything that would interest the men, upon northern France, where they are going, upon the customs and practices of